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LETTERS

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

As. at. cur. K

ON HIS

INCONSISTENCY

AS THE

MINISTER OF INDIA.

LONDON:

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1792.



LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

SIR,

THE important events which have happened in India in the last year, naturally excite the public attention, and we may expect that a considerable portion of the approaching Session will be spent in debates upon the past and present state of that country.

A concise and candid examination of the conduct of his Majesty's India Ministers may

be of some service to those who neither wish to condemn nor to applaud without a cause. I have imposed this task upon myself, and will endeavour, at least, fairly and honestly to execute it.

I do not impute the part that Mr. Pitt and yourself have taken in the present war, either to avarice, to rapacity, or to a desire of extending the patronage of office ; those who bring such charges against you, act as absurdly and as unjustly towards you, as you have acted in many instances towards Mr. Hastings.

But I affirm it as a fact, capable of clear and incontrovertible proof, and from which, when Mr. Fox brings the subject forward, there can be no defence *in argument*, whatever there may be *in numbers*, that in *the origin of the war*, in *its continuance*, and in *the*
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professed object to be attained by it, *if complete success* should be the result of it, you have departed *from every principle* that you yourself laid down, as the *true and only principles*, by which India *ought to be governed*, either when you were Lord Advocate of Scotland in the Administration of Lord North, and Chairman of the India Committee, as Treasurer of the Navy under Lord Shelburne, or as the uncontrouled Minister of India, for the last seven years under Mr. Pitt's Bill.

I affirm it also to be a clear and incontrovertible fact, that there is not *a principle*, which you voted to impeach Mr. Hastings for having avowed or acted upon, during his Administration, that you have not carried *infinitely beyond what you accused him of carrying it*, since the commencement of the present war.

Three very remarkable instances have occurred in a short period, in which gross and wanton injustice has been severely punished.

The unprovoked and faithless conduct of the late Government of France to Great Britain during the American war has utterly destroyed the Monarchy of that country.

In return for the support which Opposition gave for many years to all the follies and absurdities of Mr. Burke, that Senator contrived to render the Opposition unpopular throughout the country, precisely at the moment when the Russian armament left the supporters of Mr. Pitt without an argument to urge in his behalf, and had even inspired his opponents with the hopes of overturning his Administration.

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The present war in India has compelled Mr. Pitt and yourself to throw off that mask of deception which you had assumed, in order to wound Mr. Hastings the deeper, to give *your entire approbation* to measures infinitely stronger *than the strongest of those*, which were deemed criminal in him to adopt, and to carry your ideas of *conquest* and extent of *dominion* in India, far beyond any that you accused him of having entertained.

I propose, in the course of my correspondence, to take a concise review of the principal measures of *your administration*; I say *your administration*, because although his Majesty has appointed six India Commissioners, you have been hitherto looked upon as the sole India Minister, possessing the fullest confidence of Mr. Pitt, who enjoyed, and was, therefore, enabled, to confer upon you the

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fullest

fullest confidence of his Sovereign, and both Houses of Parliament.

It was after a very arduous struggle, with a very powerful party, that you succeeded to your ministerial office, nor did any man, at any period enter into office, under so many and such great advantages as you did in August 1784, when Mr. Pitt's system obtained the sanction of the Legislature.

India had been restored to universal peace, in despite of the measures which *you* had taken to prevent it, *when no responsibility* was annexed to your situation.

Hostilities with the Marattas had actually ceased in October 1781, though Mr. Dundas's resolutions prevented the final ratification of peace with those states until February

1783.

1783. Peace with France was proclaimed in June 1783, and with Tippoo Sultan in March 1784.

Bengal and its dependencies produced an annual revenue of above five millions sterling. Of this revenue and of such resources as could be procured on the Carnatic and at Bombay, you had the entire disposal.

Before I proceed to consider the use which you have made of the resources, *which you have impeached another person for procuring*, it may be useful to trace the steps by which you ascended to your present rank.

The Minister, who had not been able to guard his country from a ruinous war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, thought it very extraordinary that an invasion of the

Carnatic by Hyder Ally Cawn was not prevented, and you were appointed the Chairman of a Committee, instituted by the House of Commons, to inquire into the cause of that invasion. This naturally led to a review of the whole political system of India, comprehending in it every important act of the Administration of Mr. Hastings.

After your labours were finished, and they are contained in six voluminous Reports, you affected to feel such an abhorrence for the *political conduct* of Mr. Hastings, that the very critical and dangerous situation of India in 1782, could not induce you to refrain from moving the most extraordinary series of Resolutions (considering what *you* have *since* done *as a Minister*) that have ever appeared.

I am

I am not of rank enough to say what the Lord Chancellor did in the last Session, “ that “ they will remain an eternal monument of “ Parliamentary folly and absurdity ;” but this *I will say*, that they will remain an eternal monument of the inconsistency of Mr. Dundas, since, with complete power delegated to you by the law, *you have, in no one instance*, adhered to those Resolutions ; but, on the contrary, you have *persisted* in every *system* which those Resolutions *condemn*, and have neglected to *redress* a single grievance, affirmed by those Resolutions *to exist*.

The first important measure of your Administration, which has been strongly condemned, was your arrangement for liquidating the debts of the Nabob of Arcot and the Rajah of Tanjore.

Mr. Fox brought this subject before Parliament, and your conduct was condemned by Mr. Burke in such terms, as could not possibly be used with impunity by a Gentleman to a Gentleman, and had never before been applied, even by a disappointed Patriot to a successful Minister.

In order to delude *the public* into an opinion that he acted *from conviction*, Mr. Burke, eight months after he abused you in Parliament, sent his abuse into the world in the form of a pamphlet.

Who that reflects seriously upon this circumstance, can in future put the slightest confidence in the honour of a public man? Would it have been thought *within possibility*, a very few years ago, that a difference with his Party, in a matter *which concerns not us*,
should

should have furnished Mr. Burke with a plea
 for throwing himself into the arms of Mr.
 Pitt and Mr. Dundas? Or that *they* would
 have received, with *so much cordiality*, the
 man who had held them forth to the world
 as the most corrupt and contemptible of hu-
 man beings, who had solemnly, and in the
 face of his country declared, “ that all the
 “ acts and monuments in the records of *pe-*
 “ *culation, the consolidated corruption of ages,*
 “ the patterns of *exemplary plunder* in the he-
 “ roic times of *Roman iniquity*, never equalled
 “ the gigantic corruption of a single act”
 done by yourself and Mr. Pitt? “ That in-
 “ cited by *no public advantage*, impelled by *no*
 “ *public necessity*, in a strain of *the most wan-*
 “ *ton perfidy which has ever stained the annals*
 “ of mankind, you had delivered over to *plun-*
 “ *der, imprisonment, exile, and death itself,*
 “ the unhappy and deluded souls, who, un-
 “ taught

“ taught by any former example, were still
 “ weak enough to put their trust in English
 ‘faith ?’”

My reason for closing my first letter with this quotation is, to impress *honest men* with an opinion that no credit ought to be given to assertions, let them come from what quarter they will, if *unaccompanied by proofs*; and if Mr. Burke should be *your Advocate*, in the ensuing Session, which is by no means improbable, I wish to let the public know what opinion *he* entertained of *your* profligacy, a very short time ago.

ASIATICUS.

Dec. 25, 1791.

LET-

LETTER II.

SIR,

AS I have undertaken to point out your *inconsistencies*, it will be necessary to shew in how many instances you have adopted the plans of Mr. Hastings, *as a Minister*, and condemned them, *as a Member of Parliament*.

In the latter capacity, you have proclaimed to the world that certain important advantages secured to this country by the late Governor General, were obtained by exactions, *grinding and oppressive*, by *injustice*, and by *flagrant breach of faith*.

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In *your Ministerial character* you have *annually* taken credit for every increase of resource, *thus fraudulently and scandalously obtained*, and though enjoined by a *positive law* to redress *all wrongs*, committed by British subjects in India, you have not *in a single instance*, afforded redress, thereby holding up the British Nation to the contempt and derision of all Europe.

You have, in fact, followed the example of the Spanish Corregidor, who punished a robber for stealing a thousand doubloons, but at the same time put the money into his own pocket. I state this on a supposition that the complaints of wrongs having been done by Mr. Hastings, are founded in truth. My own opinion is, that the complaints were not well founded; in that case, the nation has nothing to answer for; but it is impossible

possible to reconcile to consistency, or to any man's sense of justice, the conduct of the Minister of India.

This will afford an ample field for discussion to the Historian, the Philosopher, and the Moralist, when the politics and the parties of the present day shall cease.

Mr. Fox and yourself differed in many points relative to India, but on three very material heads, you were fully agreed some years ago.

The first, that the *honour* and *justice* of this country were concerned, in procuring *redress* for all *wrongs* committed by British subjects in India.

The second, that all *offensive wars*, for the purpose of *conquest*, and *extent of dominion*, should be *absolutely prohibited in future*.

The third, that Mr. Hastings should be immediately recalled to Great Britain.

What Mr. Fox *would have done*, I know not, for he lost his office, and failed in his India plan at the same time.

You have been *above seven* years the Minister of India—What you have done, *I know*, and in these three essential points, you have totally departed from your own professions.

When Mr. Pitt's Bill placed complete power, and complete responsibility in your hands, in August 1784, Mr. Hastings was the Governor General of Bengal—his continuance or his removal absolutely depended *upon you*—for the veto of the Proprietors had been annulled by the Legislature.

You

You had moved a series of Resolutions against him in 1782, in which all his *political* acts were condemned, commencing with the stoppage of the King's tribute in 1772, and closing *with the grant of a sum of money to the Marattas*, and the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, in 1781.

When the House, upon your motion, had voted all these Resolutions, you moved,
 “ That Warren Hastings, Esq. having in
 “ fundry instances acted in a manner repug-
 “ nant to the *honour* and *policy* of this nation,
 “ and thereby brought *great calamities on*
 “ *India*, and *enormous expences* on the East
 “ India Company, it was the *duty* of the
 “ Directors of the said Company to pursue
 “ all legal and effectual means *to remove him*
 “ *from his office, and to recal him to Great*
 “ *Britain.*”

Prima facie, we would suppose that a man who would form a pretence to any sort of consistency, would not allow Mr. Hastings to remain for a moment in India, after having given *such a character of him*, and after he not only had the power to remove him, but was deeply responsible for continuing him in office.

But the whole transaction fairly explained, would do you credit, if your subsequent conduct had not convinced me, that you have never acted upon any fixed principles of justice, as an India Minister.

One of the first acts of your administration was to empower the Directors to transmit to Mr. Hastings those thanks which his constituents had voted in the preceding year, and which Lord Sydney had prohibited them

them from sending to him. These were accompanied by the *unanimous thanks* of the Court of Directors, *with your name signed in approbation, before they were sent*; and to shew that it is impossible to move a step without involving you in a fresh inconsistency, the thanks were particularly given to him, for his “*uncommon zeal, ability, and exertion in finding resources for supporting the war in the Carnatic, under so many and pressing difficulties.*”

Will it be believed, that after *signing your approbation* to this Letter in 1784, you should, in thirty months, have voted, as a Member of Parliament, to impeach Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors, *for finding those very resources?* yet the fact is literally true.

On the 4th of March 1785, you took into consideration an earnest request that Mr. Hastings had transmitted from Bengal two years before, for an appointment of a successor to his office. It is not possible for any Minister to shew a stronger sense of the merits of a public servant, than you displayed in your mode of complying with that request.

You begin by stating, that the appointment of a successor was made, in compliance *with the earnest request of Mr. Hastings.* You next acknowledge *his long, faithful, and able services.* You fix no particular day for his resignation, but leave it to him to resign the first convenient opportunity in the ensuing season, commencing in October 1785, and ending in March 1786.

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Here then was a Governor General, whom in April 1782, you had branded on the Journals of Parliament, “ as having in sundry
 “ instances acted in a manner repugnant to
 “ the *honour and policy of the nation*, as having
 “ brought *great calamities on India*, and *enormous expences on the East India Company*,” continued in office, if he had so pleased, until the 25th of March 1786, thanked in the *strongest possible terms* for his services, which are acknowledged to have been *long, faithful, and able*.

Such a contradiction could not escape the sagacity of Mr. Fox, and he noticed it in Parliament. Your reply was *bold, manly, and just*: “ That Mr. Hastings had performed
 “ *great and essential services*—that he was *the*
 “ *saviour of India*—that you *approved* of the
 “ *thanks*—that he *well merited them*—that it
 “ was true, you had moved the recal of Mr.
 “ Hastings

“Hastings in 1782, but now sincerely rejoiced that the Proprietors *had resisted your motion*, as by so doing, *they had rendered a very essential service to the country.*”

This was saying in effect, though not in terms, that you had been grossly mistaken in 1782. How to reconcile your *subsequent conduct*, to this open and manly and *honourable avowal* of Mr. Hastings's services, would puzzle a whole College of Jesuits.

Mr. Hastings neither accepted the Government up to the period you allowed him to remain in it, nor waited to receive the thanks that you transmitted to him; but peace being universally restored in India, and Bengal and its Dependencies fixed upon the system which you have *approved as a Minister*, and *condemned as a Senator*, he resigned

signed a station which he had held for thirteen years ; a period remarkable for the struggles of contending factions at home ; for the increase of taxes, and the addition of above one hundred millions to the public debt, for the loss of empire in America, in Africa, and in Europe ; *and for its extension in Asia,* through the exertions of *that Man*, whom you have since brought to *Impeachment*.

On the day of his arrival in London, Mr. Burke gave notice of his intention to move an inquiry into his conduct, early in the following Session ; and in the same week, the Directors, *with your concurrence and approbation, repeated their unanimous thanks to him for his long, faithful, and able services.*

Mr. Hastings well knew that every *material arrangement* which he had formed, *had*

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been highly approved—he knew the great and important service that his name had been of, to you and Mr. Pitt, in that struggle, which ended in the removal of Mr. Fox—it was natural for him to expect *consistency* and *justice* from those who so unequivocally acknowledged his services. What then could he fear from a fair investigation of his conduct ?

Experience must, however, have convinced him, *that there is no little enemy*. So said the wise Doctor Franklin, and a wise Italian before him.

When Colonel Popham was encamped in the vicinity of Gualior in 1780, Mr. Hastings desired him always to have in view the capture of that fortress. Sir Eyre Coote ridiculed the idea of taking it, without a battering train, and a regular siege. I met
him

him upon the Ganges in July, and he told me, “ Hastings must be mad to think that
 “ the strongest fort in Indostan can be taken,
 “ by two thousand Sepoys.”

Mr. Hastings entertained hopes of success from the confidence which he knew the Marattas had in the natural strength of the place ; Colonel Popham escalated, and surprised the fortress. An action of which you have made very honourable mention in your Reports.

Mr. Hastings in this instance proved himself a very good general for India, but he has been unable to cope with the veteran political commanders of his own country ; for, deeply intrenched under your acknowledgement of his *long, faithful and able services*, and *strongly fortified*, as he conceived, by your adoption

of *all his systems, foreign and domestic*, he entertained as little idea of danger from the scouting parties of Mr. Burke, as the Marattas from the light infantry of Colonel Popham, when sheltered by the scarped rocks, and lofty ramparts of Gualior.

ASIATICUS.

Dec. 6, 1791.

LET-

LETTER III.

SIR,

AS I have not been educated in the school of English politics, I will not pronounce that you have acted *uniformly wrong*, because in some instances, I cannot reconcile your conduct to any one principle of honour, of honesty, of justice, or even of common sense.

Much that you have *done*, since you became the India Minister, entitles you, in my humble opinion, to the approbation of every fair and candid man ; but in order to judge impartially of your conduct, I must state the circumstances under which you succeeded

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to the management of the British Empire in India.

It had most unfortunately been the fashion for some time prior to that period, to describe the countries under our influence, as har-
rassed, oppressed, and totally ruined. You had given into this folly in a certain degree, but the writers of the Select Committee Reports went still farther, and Mr. Burke, while the Bills of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt were before the House, never spoke of Bengal, but as of a country ruined beyond the possibility of redemption; we were supposed, by him, to have harassed, and murdered the natives, not by *hundreds*, but by *millions*.

Mr. Francis, who from the rank he had held in India, could neither speak, nor write without effect, had said to the Directors, at
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the close of 1781, " It is my *most serious opi-*
nion, that you will *never again* have an in-
 vestment purchased with any savings from
 the revenues of Bengal."

These representations always appeared to me like the ravings of madmen, for I had crossed the kingdom of Bengal in almost every direction in the course of fifteen years, and had gone through the province of Benares, and the Vizier's dominions, without seeing any of those marks of misery and wretchedness, which made so conspicuous a figure in the Committee Reports; I did, therefore, venture to say, the first time I had the honour to speak in Parliament, that Bengal would yield from the various resources of its Government, upon the restoration of peace, a nett surplus revenue to Great Britain, of one million, five hundred thousand pounds;

pounds ; but though you are, as I am, a *sanguine man*, yet you would not, nor would any other Member, *hazard the same opinion at that time.*

I made this calculation upon an idea most undoubtedly that you would very soon discover, *as a Minister*, the follies of your opinions, *as a Member of Parliament* ; that you would not be disposed to surrender *a single advantage* that Mr. Hastings had procured ; and my idea was a just one.

You have continued the Salt Monopoly, the Opium Monopoly, the Mode of Letting Lands to Farmers, when Zemindars refuse to give the rent that Government demands. You have continued to receive the Additional Revenue from Benares, and the Increased Subsidy from Oude ; *and the result is*, that
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my prediction was much more than verified in *three years*, and the surplus is *now* above *two millions sterling a year*.

The Resolutions of a House of Commons have not the force of law; but where a Member *moves them*, professing too that he means they should be as a *warning*, and a *guide*, to an inferior body, one would naturally conclude that he would *himself* be influenced by them.

In the year 1782, the House of Commons resolved, *unanimously*, upon *your motion*,
 “ That the simple grounds on which the
 “ British Government ought to have endeavoured to establish an influence superior
 “ to other European Powers, should be, the
 “ maintenance of an *inviolable character* for

“ *moderation, good faith, and scrupulous re-*
 “ *gard to treaty.*

“ That the stoppage of *the King's tribute,*
 “ and the sale of *Corah and Allahabad* to
 “ the Vizier, were contrary to *policy* and
 “ *good faith,* and that such *wise and practi-*
 “ *cable* methods should be adopted *in future,*
 “ as may tend to *redeem the national honour,*
 “ and *recover the attachment and confidence of*
 “ *the Princes of India.*”

What attention have *you,* as a *Minister,*
 paid to this Resolution, or to any other that
 you moved in 1782?

Have you *redeemed* the National Honour,
 by paying to the King the arrears of his tri-
 bute? Have you paid him one rupee of the
 current tribute, to which he was annually
 en-

entitled, since *you* became a Minister? On the contrary, you expressed *a very serious alarm*, when Mr. Hastings merely exerted his *influence* in favour of the old Monarch.

In what a superior light does Mr. Hastings appear to you, in every thing that relates to the Emperor of Indostan!!

Mr. Hastings affirmed fairly and openly, in 1773, that by quitting the protection of the English, and ceding Corah and Allahabad to the Marattas, the King had forfeited *his own right* to those Provinces, and to his tribute in future. The Provinces he, therefore, sold to Sujah Dowlah, and withheld the payment of the tribute until he received the sentiments of the Directors, who would not stir a step in such a business without the knowledge of the Minister. Both transactions

were approved, and Mr. Hastings was ordered to discontinue any farther payment of tribute.

You declared, in 1782, that the conduct of Mr. Hastings, and of the Company, in this transaction, was contrary to *policy* and *good faith*; you farther said, and so did Parliament, that such *wise* and *practicable methods* should be taken in future, as *may redeem the national honour*. If these expressions mean any thing, they must mean, that we should, at least, pay the King his tribute *in future*; yet, with more than two millions a year surplus revenue, you have not paid him a cowrie: he has been the sport of fortune, and after having been tortured by a savage, was deprived of his eyes, in a manner too shocking to be related.

The man who thinks that we acted towards the King in a manner contrary to *policy*

licy and *good faith*, must impute his early misfortunes to the Company, and to Lord North, and the more grievous calamities of his later days to Mr. Dundas. Your opinion and mine, I fancy, are the same, and that you are *now* as sensible, as I always was, of the *impolicy* and *injustice* of those Resolutions relative to Shaw Allum.

Mr. Pitt, when he moved his India Bill, seems to have adopted all your ideas—that treaties should be *inviolably* kept—*offensive wars* most carefully *avoided*; and to shew his opinion of the existing government, he talked of offences having been committed equally *shocking to humanity*, opposite to *justice*, and contrary to every principle of *religion or morality*.

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After *such a description*, he introduced a clause in his Bill, which states in substance, “ that complaints *have prevailed*, that *divers* “ *Rajahs, &c. &c. &c. have been unjustly de-* “ *prived of, or compelled to abandon, or relin-* “ *quish their lands, &c. &c. &c. and the* “ *principles of justice, and the honour of the* “ *country, require that such complaints be* “ *forthwith inquired into, fully investigated,* “ *and, if founded in truth, effectually re-* “ *dressed;*” which redress you are, in the same clause, *enjoined to give.*

This clause applies *most pointedly and directly* to the case of Cheyt Sing, many years Rajah and Zemindar of Benares. It could apply to no other person under the Bengal Government.

It is perfectly clear, that in 1782, Cheyt Sing was, in your opinion, unjustly expelled from Benares, because you *reported* his case to Parliament, and urged his expulsion as a reason for the immediate recal of Mr. Hastings; but when you investigated his case in 1784, you must *have changed your opinion*, or you would have ordered Cheyt Sing to be *forthwith* restored, agreeably to the *positive injunctions of the Legislature*. Every rational man must form this conclusion.

But my understanding is confounded, as I proceed through the *changes and chances* of your public life. For with a positive command *forthwith* to restore Cheyt Sing, if he had been unjustly expelled, and doing *nothing* for two years and nine months, respecting that Rajah, I find you, as a Senator, concurring in proclaiming to the world, “ That
“ War-

“ Warren Hastings, in direct breach of his
 “ duty, *and in positive contradiction to the*
 “ *treaties, stipulations, and engagements,* which
 “ subsisted between the *East India Company*
 “ and Cheyt Sing, required him to furnish
 “ three battalions of Sepoys at his own ex-
 “ pence, and did extort from him five lacks
 “ of rupees, under pretence of paying for the
 “ said three battalions.”

It is beyond my conception how a man, so
 thinking of the demand which led to the ex-
 pulsion of Cheyt Sing, and who had voted
 also that “ that Prince was wickedly, arbi-
 “ trarily, and tyrannically expelled from his
 “ dominions,” could sleep a night in his bed
 in peace, without doing what the *law* had
 positively enjoined him to do, namely, to *re-*
store him to his dominions.

But

But the farther I advance, the more does my astonishment increafe; for you had scarcely sent Mr. Burke to the Lords with this your *solemn opinion*, than you presented to the House a complete statement of the resources of the Bengal Government, in which you took credit for two hundred thousand pounds a year additional resource, obtained by the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, and which it was downright *robbery* to continue to receive upon the principle of the Impeachment. As a proof that *you* entertained no idea of *his restoration*, you gave the House reason to believe this would be a *permanent* revenue; it has *never* failed us, and is applied to the service of the Bombay army at this moment.

The public have received about two millions sterling *more* from Benares since Cheyt Sing's expulsion, than they would have re-

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ceived,

ceived, if he had not been expelled. Should you say in reply, *non rapui, sed recepi*, I should imagine that those who think the act of expulsion originally wrong, will adopt Dean Swift's comment upon that sentence.

If I find it *impossible* to reconcile your conduct on the subject of Benares and the Mogul, to any idea of consistency, I am equally at a loss to account for what you have done as to Oude.

The arrangement which Mr. Hastings formed with the Vizier, had your *positive* and *repeated* approbation. Upon an idea that Sir John Macpherson intended some change, you wrote *most peremptorily*, that "the agreement formed by Mr. Hastings should be invariably adhered to." Could any man living believe, unless the fact was proved beyond
all

all doubt, that in less than two years from the date of such an approbation, you could have agreed with Mr. Burke, that it was a high crime and misdemeanour in Mr. Hastings to form that arrangement?

You have said in parliament, and I agree with you most cordially, “ that India is the
 “ brightest jewel in the British Crown; that
 “ we have governed India better than the
 “ best of the native Sovereigns now govern
 “ it; that so far from dreading a decrease in
 “ our resources, we have every reason to expect
 “ an increase; and that, before this war
 “ broke out, there was good ground to expect
 “ that we should assist Great Britain before
 “ we required assistance from her.”

But how a person, professing such sentiments, can stir *one step* with Mr. Burke on

the subject of India, is to me *incomprehensible*. Every word that *he* has ever uttered, every line that *he* has ever written, describes misery, and wretchedness, and distress *past* and *present*, and predicts it in future, unless *Mr. Fox's Bill should be adopted*.

ASIATICUS.

Jan. 1, 1792.

LET-

LETTER IV.

SIR,

IN order to shew the inconsistency of your conduct as the Minister of India, I have been obliged to mention the name of Mr. Hastings, and to allude to the depending Impeachment.

I am aware of the delicacy of this subject, and of the impropriety of entering into a discussion of facts, while the merit or criminality of those facts remains to be determined in a Court of Justice,

I will, therefore, strictly confine myself to great *political* points, and shall proceed to
shew

shew, that you have departed from the *spirit* of your own resolutions, and from the opinions which you delivered with the utmost solemnity, in a Parliament that is no more ; and consequently I may with propriety allude to them.

The Impeachment of Mr. Hastings was originally rested upon a ground which it would have ill become an enlightened Assembly to reject, *Humanity*. The Member who moved it, avowed most unequivocally, that Mr. Hastings had reduced fertile provinces to deserts, and a people once opulent to the lowest state of wretchedness and despair : that it was for the misery which he had entailed upon millions that he impeached him ; but if he had *improved the resources of the State, encouraged commerce, aided agriculture,*

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ture, and had increased the population of the provinces committed to his government, he never should have inquired into his particular conduct, but should have hailed him on his return to England as a benefactor to mankind.

I confess I have never reflected upon this very sensible part of Mr. Burke's speech without astonishment, mixed with indignation, at his subsequent conduct.

But, as the Minister of India, you knew in 1786, that Mr. Hastings *had done* all that Mr. Burke accused him of not having done, just as well as you did *in the following year*, when you unequivocally affirmed in Parliament, that the state of *England*, compared to that of *India*, was as *darkness* opposed to *light*; that *Bengal* had *improved*, and was

im-

improving, under our Administration. A majority of the late Parliament voted with Mr. Burke from a conviction, beyond all doubt, that the British Government in Bengal had been a curse, and not a blessing to the people.

Mr. Burke's first motion applied most pointedly *to you*: it was upon the Rohilla war, which you had condemned, (and Parliament *concurred* with you) as *iniquitous, and unjust*. The King's Ministers, including Mr. Pitt, differed completely with you on this point; but though you affirmed, that your sentiments *were unaltered*, that you *then* thought of the *iniquity*, and *injustice* of the war, as you had thought of it in 1782; yet, as the Legislature had so often appointed Mr. Hastings Governor General of Bengal *since that war had been concluded*, you could
not

not vote it to merit Impeachment. An argument this of very considerable weight : but to shew *your inconsistency*, you never again urged it ; for it might have been used with *just the same propriety* against nine tenths of the allegations, which *you afterwards* voted to be *criminal*, as against the Rohilla charge.

I think I can prove incontrovertibly, that the *principles* upon which you condemned the Rohilla war, would apply with *increased force*, to the condemnation of the present war in India. Of this war *you* have very highly approved, and many have supposed you to be in fact the author of it.

It is *universally* agreed, that the Rohilla war originated in a breach of faith on the part of the Rohillas. *You* said, and so did Parliament, that *satisfaction* might have been

obtained by other means than war. I believe it.

When the British army was upon the frontier of Rohilcund, there can be no doubt of the perfect readiness of the Rohillas, to make considerable sacrifices to avoid the war.

And can any man in his senses doubt of Tippoo's *readiness*, and his *eagerness* to give the Raja of Travancore *complete satisfaction*, after he knew that our army was assembled in the plains of Trichinopoly for the attack of his Southern possessions, *which he was in no condition to defend at the time?* but is that to be urged as a reason for our desisting?

In the present war, and in the Rohilla war then, we are to consider whether the *policy* was wise or not. I have proved the justice of both,

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The professed object of the Rohilla war after its commencement was to annex to the Subship of Oude a territory of considerable extent adjoining to it, bounded as Oude is, by the Ganges to the West, and by the same chain of mountains to the East, producing a revenue of half a million sterling a year, and under the dominion of a tribe of Afghan Tartars, the most warlike and enterprizing people in Indostan, who had invaded and subdued Rohilcund in the year 1740.

To any gentleman who inspects Major Rennell's Map of Indostan, Oude and Rohilcund will appear to be as naturally united under one Government, as the two kingdoms which are now called Great Britain. The political advantages resulting from this accession of dominion to Oude are no longer *speculative*. From the experience of seven-

teen years, I am warranted in saying, that these advantages have been most important indeed.

The Sovereign of Oude has been rendered more dependent upon us since the extent of his empire. He has from that time paid more than one-third of all the expences of the Bengal army : the acquisition of Benares, and the receipt of more than sixteen millions sterling from countries beyond the Carumnassa, had their *origin* in that Rohilla war, which you so strongly condemned ; and Oude has been secured from invasion.

The *policy*, therefore, of the Rohilla war is perfectly justified by the experience of seventeen years.

Let me next consider the *policy* of the present war.

Lord

Lord Cornwallis conceived that Tippoo's antipathy to the English would never be lessened, that he would seize the first favourable moment of attack, and *therefore*, as Tippoo had given us a *justifiable ground for war*, it was right to take advantage of the *troubles in France*, and to crush him, or at least very much to reduce his power. To effect this purpose, his Lordship concluded one treaty with the Marattas, and another with the Nizam; the professed object of both being *conquest, and extent of dominion, for ourselves and our allies.*

Two campaigns have already been made, and the war still rages. Of success, and of complete and speedy success, I do not doubt: but the expence has been enormously great: the Carnatic has been drained: Bengal has afforded above three millions since the war

com-

commenced; and more than a million in specie, of public and private property, has been remitted from England; and there may be very good grounds, after all, for doubting as to the *Cui Bono* of the war.

But the Rohilla war was completely finished in one campaign, by one brigade of the British troops, and without one rupee of expence to the Company.

It would be a bad argument to use in defence of an unjust war, that we gained money by it; but the Rohilla war, and the present war, both stand on the same ground of justice, a breach of faith committed against our allies.

It was objected to the Rohilla war, that we expelled certain Mussulman Chiefs who

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had governed the natives of Rohilcund with lenity and justice. If the origin of the war *was just*, this objection is of no force ; *if unjust*, it is a great and grievous aggravation *of the original crime*. The same objection would apply against the present war, if it should end, as it is likely to do, in the destruction of Tippoo ; for although his avowed antipathy to all Europeans induces us to wish the annihilation of his power, yet I do not believe that such an event would be of advantage to his subjects. Savage, tyrannical, and faithless as he has been to us, the best informed officers employed in the present service represent his country to be in the highest state of cultivation, his villages very numerous, his peasantry well clothed, well fed, attached to his Government, and happy and contented under it.

You

You are too well versed *now* in the politics of India, not to be aware, that no *possible* close of the present war can bring with it the immense *political advantages* which resulted from *the Rohilla war*. I earnestly pray, that the *speculators* of this day may, at the close of *seventeen years*, be proved to have been as much mistaken as the *speculators* were in 1774.

The Rohilla war was pronounced by Mr. Francis, and by the Company too, to be founded on *wrong policy*, because it increased the *power* of Sujah Dowlah, and carried our arms into countries hardly included in the maps of Indostan. How futile and absurd must those objections appear now to be, since the fact is, that with the most perfect security we have advanced our frontier line of defence six hundred miles beyond the Carumnassa; we have obtained a perpetual provision for the pay of more than a third of
our

our army by the consequences of this annexation, we have obtained wealth for the public, and we have secured the empire of our ally from external attacks from 1774, to this day.

The arguments used by Mr. Francis in 1774, and by the Company the next year, were very plausible, though, as it has turned out, ill-founded: much more plausible objections have been applied against your present war :
 “ the Marattas and Tippoo were a just balance
 “ to each other, if we destroy the one, the
 “ other will never be at peace with us. The
 “ Maratta cavalry is more numerous than
 “ Tippoo’s. If they possess, upon the peace,
 “ the Table Land of Myfore, they will be
 “ ready at all times to pour down upon the
 “ Carnatic as Hyder was, and no force of in-
 “ fantry can secure the Carnatic from the in-

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“ curious

“incursions of horse.” These, and very many other powerful arguments have been urged against this war; I hope and believe that experience will prove them to be as ill-founded as those were which you have urged, and unhappily for this country, *with so much effect*, against Mr. Hastings.

ASIATICUS.

Jan. 6, 1792.

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LETTER V.

SIR,

IN the year 1785, Mr. Burke publicly' accused you of a design to involve our Indian Government in impenetrable obscurity, and to exclude the transactions of the British Administration in Asia, from the liberal curiosity of an English gentleman.*

This was a very ill-founded charge, at the time he made it; and in the year 1787, you determined to lay annually before Parliament an accurate statement of the resources, and political connections of Great Britain in India.

* Mr. Burke's speech, February, 1785.

This determination was very honourable to you, although it has exposed your *inconsistency* in the most glaring colours, and has afforded an additional proof of the futility of *political speculations*, relative to *so distant a dominion*.

On the 7th of May, 1787, you opened your first budget.—It contained the following very *comfortable, and material information*:

“ That Bengal was, undoubtedly, the *most*
 “ *flourishing country in India* : that it yielded a
 “ nett surplus revenue of *one hundred and*
 “ *eighty lacks*, which you were confident,
 “ (and here you were *correct*) would be
 “ increased in the next year, *to more than two*
 “ *millions sterling* : that peace was our object ;
 “ but that we were able to repel any *attack*,
 “ with a well-disciplined army of *seventy or*
 “ *eighty*

“ *eighty thousand men, and a surplus revenue*
 “ *of two millions, for peace or war, if ne-*
 “ *cessary : that Mr. Burke, on a former*
 “ *day, had said, “ a ten years peace in India*
 “ *was too long a period to reckon on ;” but*
 “ *you could not allow, that we were like-*
 “ *ly to be attacked : there was nothing to*
 “ *tempt an enemy to attack us : there was*
 “ *no prospect of success for any power in*
 “ *India : upon what ground could any In-*
 “ *dian power attack us ? They would have*
 “ *to engage seventy or eighty thousand*
 “ *men, with two millions surplus revenue,*
 “ *and in case of need, another two millions*
 “ *to add to it. The total increase of expence in*
 “ *the last war, amounted to no more in one year,*
 “ *upon an average, than two crores and three*
 “ *lacks, and there was no reason to suppose that*
 “ *any future war could be more expensive ; for*
 “ *then we had all India, America, and Europe,*
 “ *to*

“ to fight against : the surplus revenue would
 “ be sufficient for any future war : that you
 “ were as anxious as any man, not to pro-
 “ voke hostilities ; but if we *were provoked*,
 “ you felt a pride to say, that we were fully
 “ able to repel any attack, let it come from
 “ what quarter it might : that our posses-
 “ sions in India, properly considered, *were*
 “ the brightest jewel in the British crown.”

It is singular of this speech, that where
 you have repeated *facts*, you are most accu-
 rately correct.

You were equally correct in predicting the
 future increase of our Bengal resources,
 which Mr. Hastings had also foretold some
 time before. But in speculating upon the
 continuance of peace, or upon the diminished
 expence

expenditure of a war, when war should break out, you erred most egregiously.

The people of England are renowned throughout the world for fair and open dealing; for benevolence, for charity, and for an abhorrence of deceit: but British politicians have often despised those ties which bind man to man in society; and whoever *seriously* reflects upon the singular event which happened *two days only* after you opened your India budget, must agree with me in opinion, that *justice, sincerity, and good faith*, are qualities to which some of his Majesty's cabinet ministers cannot possibly lay claim.

On the 7th of May, you truly affirmed that Bengal *was the most flourishing country in India*.

You

You took credit for an annual revenue of nearly five millions sterling, *for the six preceding years*, and you stated very good grounds to induce Parliament to believe, that the Bengal resources would be increased in future years, as they actually were. It had happened to you *also*, to lay before Parliament, as chairman of an India committee, the actual state of the Bengal resources, for the fifteen *preceding years* ; by which, to any man who will read, the progressive increase of resources during the administration of Mr. Hastings is clearly explained. But on the 9th of May, after *a pause of forty-eight hours*, you *concurred* with Mr. Burke in affirming in behalf of all the people of Great-Britain, that *Bengal had been desolated* ; the natives *oppressed, and destroyed* ; and the revenues *diminished* ; and that all the *extraordinary resources*, of which you had *boasted* on the 7th, were procured

cured by *fraud, injustice, oppression, and breach of faith.*

You well know that *I* use no orator's privilege; *I* neither *invent*, nor *exaggerate*, nor *misrepresent*; and you know it to be a fact, that of the various component parts of the Bengal resources, *all*, except the land revenues and customs, were *created* by Mr. Hastings, and those two branches of resources, *he improved.*

Alas ! Sir, the 7th of May could not *possibly* have been a *proud day for England*, as you affirmed it to be, and the 9th an unfortunate one for Mr. Hastings, if the Minister of India had been actuated by a sense of *consistency, or justice.*

In the three following years, 1788, 89, and 90, the same flattering accounts of the

flourishing state of Bengal were repeated by you to the House of Commons, as regularly, as the House of Commons declared through their managers, to the *Lords* and to the *world*, that Bengal had been *ruined* by Mr. Hastings.

In each year you repeated your *confident expectation* of the *continuance of peace*; and you affirmed, and I agreed with you, “ that we
 “ had a force in India sufficient to combat all
 “ that the whole world could bring against us,
 “ and a surplus of revenue greater than at
 “ any former period: that in the event of
 “ war there were funds in India to main-
 “ tain it, as there would have been in the
 “ last war, if the surplus had not been em-
 “ ployed in the purchase of investments.”

How

How vain is man, when he speculates on politics!!—Tippoo, on very bad terms with the Marattas and the Nizam; abandoned by the French; fully aware of the extent of our military force; and knowing that Lord Cornwallis had all that support from home, which was withheld from Mr. Hastings in the last war; yet placed so thorough a confidence in our moderation and love of peace, that he ventured first to insult, and afterwards to attack the Rajah of Travancote, an ally of the Carnatic,

This attack completely justified us in an instant commencement of hostilities. When Tippoo saw that we were in earnest, he changed his language; he earnestly desired us to receive a man of rank and dignity in our camp, to settle all differences.

The offer was rejected, wisely rejected, in my humble opinion; for there never was a period when, according to *human probabilities*, we had so fair an opportunity of making Tippoo smart *severely* and *quickly* for his recent conduct, and for his breach of all the important articles of Lord Macartney's Treaty.

Lord Cornwallis, in a letter to General Meadows, has stated, in the clearest language, his motives for preferring war to negotiation, after Tippoo's wanton attack of the Travancore lines.

“ *Good policy* (said his Lordship) as well
 “ as a regard to *our reputation*, in this coun-
 “ try, requires, that we should not only
 “ *exact a severe reparation from Tippoo*, but
 “ that we should take this *opportunity to reduce*
 “ *the*

“ *the power of a Prince, who avows, upon*
 “ *every occasion, so rancorous an enmity to*
 “ *our nation.*

“ *At present we have every prospect of*
 “ *aid from the Country Powers, whilst he can*
 “ *expect no assistance from France, &c. &c.*”

It appears then, that you were mistaken in supposing that no Country Power *would* presume to provoke us, and being provoked, we have preferred rightly, so I think, war to peace.

The next point in which you have erred is, as to the expence of the war; according to your *declared opinion*, no future war could be more expensive than the last. But beyond all doubt the present war exceeds that of the last, in expence, to a degree, that
 cannot

cannot be calculated at present, because there is no account, that I know of, of the quantity of Bills that have been drawn upon Bengal in the year 1791, nor will many of the contingent expences of the war be liquidated until after the restoration of peace. Some persons with whom I have conversed, have carried their ideas of the expences of the war far beyond any that I entertain ; but I can speak to some points from tolerable information. From the month of April, 1790, to the month of January, 1791, a period of nine months, Bengal supplied Fort St. George and Bombay with more than two hundred and twenty lacks of rupees in money, accepted bills, provisions and stores ; five hundred thousand pounds were remitted to Madras last year, of public money, and as much more, the property of individuals ; sixty or seventy thousand pounds

were taken from the China ships of 1790; and money was borrowed at Madras, nearly, I believe, to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds. Bills also have been drawn from India, but to what amount I cannot say. General Meadows began his operations in the month of June, 1790. We have no later intelligence from the Grand Army than the 8th of July, 1791, little more than thirteen months from the commencement of the war. Lord Cornwallis, as we learn from the Gazette, wanted a very large supply of provisions, stores of every kind, twenty-six thousand bullocks, with half that number of drivers, or his bullocks, he said, would be *useless*. These supplies could not possibly be obtained from a country so exhausted as the Carnatic, without involving individuals in considerable distress,

and

and without a material deduction from the public revenue.

I do not pretend to guess at the amount of the first year's expence, and of so many months of the second year, as may be required to bring the war to a successful termination ; but every Gentleman who considers the materials of which we are all in possession, must agree with me, that it would be an act of the grossest folly and absurdity to compare the heavy expences of this war, carried on against a *single* Power, with the *inconsiderable disbursements* of the last war, when all Europe, and all India, were united for our destruction.

ASIATICUS.

Jan. 11, 1792.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

THOUGH the annual expence of this war has very considerably exceeded the annual charge of the last, I do not impute the excess to any want of œconomy in Lord Cornwallis, or any other officer who has commanded a British army, since the commencement of hostilities.

Lord Cornwallis, both in America and in India, has been a rigid œconomist of the public money ; the excess is owing *to a total change of system at home* ; a change which was effected contrary to the wishes of the East India Company.

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The *effective force*, and the *composition* of our *Indian armies*, has been totally *altered* since the close of the last war: it was an idea from which no officer bred in the Company's service could depart, that a regiment of European infantry, with eight battalions of Sepoys, would have defeated any force that could be collected to oppose them by a native power. Sir Eyre Coote had not seven thousand infantry, and less than two thousand of this number were Europeans, when he totally defeated Hyder Ally Cawn at Porto Novo in 1781, although the latter had acquired confidence from recent successes; nor did Sir Eyre command ten thousand infantry in the field at any one period of the last war.

General Goddard's army was formed upon a more contracted scale than Sir Eyre Coote's;
the

the armies commanded by Colonel Muir, Colonel Camac, and Colonel Popham, in the late war, would now be called inconsiderable detachments, and they were composed entirely of native troops, with the exception of a few European artillerymen to work their guns.

I had infinite pleasure in hearing the panegyric which you once pronounced upon the late Lord Clive, from whom I confess that I have picked up most of my military ideas of India service; what would that enlightened statesman and soldier have conceived of your favourite system, of defending *Bengal*, by keeping up enormous military establishments at *Fort St. George* and *Bombay*? In the year 1766, when the Marattas were *united* under a powerful Prince, and in fact the only native power of any consequence in India, his Lord-

ship speaks of them and of us in the following terms :

“ At present *they* are the only power who
 “ can excite disturbances in Bengal, nor have
 “ we any thing further than a mere temporay
 “ interruption to our collections to appre-
 “ hend, *even from the Maráttas* ; since, with
 “ our *well disciplined, and numerous army*, we
 “ may bid defiance to the most powerful
 “ *country army*, that *can be brought* into the
 “ field.”

The *numerous army* of Lord Clive, was three regiments of European infantry, eighteen battalions of Seapoys, and three troops of Mogul cavalry, with a field and battering train, and five companies of European artillery ; one third of this force was stationed in

Allahabad,

Allahabad, another third in the Bahar Province, and the remainder in Bengal.

The large armies that have been brought into the field since this war commenced, *and the very great increase of Europeans in the composition of those armies*, has added greatly to the expence, and indeed in the nature of things must have carried it far beyond the charges incurred in the last war, when an establishment of *six thousand seven hundred bullocks*, for an army of thirty thousand men, excited the *wonder and censure of an enlightened House of Commons!*

When you affirmed, *in two successive years*, that no future war could be so expensive as the last, you assigned, as a reason in support of your opinion, that we had *then, Europe, America, and India* against us, *which*

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could

could never happen again. But you should have considered, that the expences of war do not depend upon the number of our enemies, but upon the quantum of force that we shall oppose to those enemies, and the state of the country in which our operations are carried on. The expence of the late predatory war in America almost defied calculation,

The extraordinaries of the American army exceeded each year the annual amount of all our Indian military expences, during so extended a warfare, and for this obvious reason, because the troops in America were chiefly fed from Leadenhall market; Lord Cornwallis has drawn every article of subsistence, almost, from the Carnatic, and Bengal, since he invaded Myfore, which, of course, has materially swelled the disbursements in the present war.

When

When you made your assertion, the chances were fifty to one in your favour that there would no be war in India in your time, or mine, and therefore you could risque any prediction relative to war expences with very tolerable security.

In these letters I have attempted with fairness, candour, and moderation, to lay before the public a series of inconsistencies, which, for the credit of British politics, cannot, I trust, be equalled in our history. I shall close my correspondence with an additional instance of your inconsistency, which is, in its nature, so very extraordinary, that I scarcely expect any gentleman will give entire credit to it, until he has examined the various documents to which I shall refer him, with the same attention that I have bestowed upon them.

I must

I must of necessity again allude to the political transactions of Mr. Hastings, in order to shew that it will be impossible to reconcile to common sense, or to any man's idea of consistency, your complete and entire approbation of the measures pursued since this war commenced, with your pointed condemnation of Mr. Hastings in the most critical moment of the last war.

I must take the fact to be as you and Mr. Pitt have affirmed it, by your speeches and your votes in the last Parliament ; that Mr. Hastings violated the most solemn treaties when he demanded a subsidy from Cheyt Sing in the last war, and when he concluded the treaty of Chunar with the Nabob of Oude. These were acts which by Mr. Pitt's assertion " No State Necessity could justify."

And

After admitting the violation of public treaties in both instances, and admitting also that no state necessity could justify such atrocious proceedings, I shall first shew the sort of necessity under which Mr. Hastings laboured, when he concluded the treaty of Chunar, and then I will prove that in your administration, treaties have been avowedly violated, and that the violation has received your *complete and entire approbation*.

Great Britain was engaged in war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, in the year 1781, and some of the wisest politicians in England expected a national bankruptcy. In India we were at war with the Marattas and Hyder Ally Cawn. The King's Ministers had informed Mr. Hastings that France intended to make the most vigorous efforts to regain that consequence

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which

which she had once held as a nation in India, and that Holland would of course assist her in carrying so great a point, to the utmost of her power.

Sir Eyre Coote, who commanded the British army in the Carnatic, wrote to Mr. Hastings, that he depended upon him for seven lacks of rupees a month, and provisions and stores, for the supply of the forces which were then opposed to Hyder Ally Cawn.

General Goddard and Colonel Muir, who commanded the armies opposed to the Peshwa's troops, and to Madajee Scindia, depended also upon Bengal for support. The Company had positively interdicted Mr. Hastings from drawing bills upon England; and as a considerable debt had been incurred

incurred upon bond, and the bonds were at a great discount, further loans upon bonds were *impracticable*. Under such circumstances Mr. Hastings left Calcutta in July 1781, and a celebrated orator has represented him on this occasion, in the character of a highwayman, hesitating whether he should take the road to Finchley, or Hounslow, a species of rhetoric *perfectly new, indictum ore alio*, and equally applicable to the most virtuous, as to the most flagitious actions. Two modes of supply were open to him; the first, a fine to be levied upon the Zemindar of Benares; the second, the immediate receipt of a very large sum of money due from the Nabob of Oude to the East India Company.

From Benares no money was procured, though by the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, the Company gained two hundred thousand

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pounds

pounds a year, and several restrictions were laid upon the new Zemindar. His rights were accurately defined, and his dependance upon Bengal unequivocally acknowledged.

From the Nabob of Oude, Mr. Hastings procured, three months after the treaty of Chunar was signed, the sum of fifty-five lacks, and within the year the sum of one hundred and thirty-eight lacks of rupees.

He must be a child in India knowledge who is not convinced that the British empire was saved by these extraordinary supplies. You once unequivocally allowed the fact to be so; and the East India Company, with the *concurrence of Mr. Pitt*, acknowledged that the exertions of Mr. Hastings preserved India; but the very great
impor-

importance of the service performed, when a large supply of ready money was procured, and the immense permanent advantages obtained for the nation, by the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, and by the treaty of Chunar, could not change the nature of the two transactions. In both cases, Mr. Hastings “*grossly violated the public faith, disgraced and degraded the British nation, and gave up its honour.*” So thinking, you felt yourself at perfect liberty, *honourably* and *conscientiously* to condemn Mr. Hastings on *one day* for these outrageous acts, and on *another* to congratulate the nation on the importance and value of resources, which, though thus *fraudulently* and *disgracefully* obtained, had made our situation so flourishing in India, that it was, when compared with the state of Great Britain, as *light* opposed to *darkness*.

From

From Ministers whose consciences are so tender, who have been so jealous of *the national honour*, and who laid it down as *their first principle*, that *treaties* concluded in India should be *inviolably observed*, the world will naturally expect the most *rigid adherence* to engagements which they have themselves ordered to be entered into, and which they have very warmly approved of.

I will state, therefore, the *letter and spirit* of the treaties concluded *under your orders* with the Nabob of Arcot, and the Rajah of Tanjore: I will shew the *manner* in which they have been *violated*, and then I will leave it to the world to determine, whether, consistently with the principles you have invariably professed as the Minister of India, you could, *under any circumstances*, have given your *complete and entire approbation* to the infraction of *those treaties*.

ASIATICUS.

Jan. 16, 1792.

L E T T E R VII.

S I R,

THE seizure of the government of the Carnatic, and of Tanjore, in violation of two solemn treaties, could not possibly have received your *complete and entire approbation*, without an utter abandonment of every *principle* that you have ever professed upon India transactions.

Of the propriety of the measure, either as it respects Lord Cornwallis or General Meadows, I do not presume even to inquire; *they* have neither moved *resolutions* in Parliament, nor pledged themselves to observe inviolably

violably *any particular line of conduct*, you have done both.

It has been usual upon all proper occasions, for his Majesty's Ministers to speak of the public services of Sir A. Campbell, the late Governor of Fort St. George, in the strongest possible terms. When Lord Grenville was in the House of Commons, he affirmed, that the nation owed obligations to Sir A. Campbell, which it could never repay, and in the House of Peers, the same Noble Lord mentioned his name with every mark of respect in the last year, and lamented his death, as a very great national misfortune.

Having had the honour to know Sir A. Campbell, many years ago, when he was chief engineer in Bengal, I cannot but be
 I pleased

pleased that his services were so warmly and publicly acknowledged.

Not meaning to insinuate that any part of Sir A. Campbell's conduct, as Governor of Fort St. George, was void of merit, it will be fully admitted, that the only important measures of his administration were, 1st, His spirited conduct, when Tippoo, in the years 1787 and 1788, menaced the Rajah of Travancore with an invasion; and 2d, His treaties with the Nabob of Arcot, and the Rajah of Tanjore.

It is to the subject of these treaties that I shall confine my remarks, and if Sir A. Campbell had infinite merit in concluding them, I do not see how you can be free from blame, in having completely and intirely approved the infraction of them.

In the course of the last war, the Nabob of the Carnatic surrendered his revenues, and his country to Lord Macartney ; he soon repented of this act, and tried in vain to get his dominions back again, until you became the Minister of India, and restored them.

The Rajah of Tanjore retained his country throughout the war, although Mr. Hastings had urged Lord Macartney to apply all the public resources of Tanjore, to the public service, as long as the war should continue.

Such a sentiment from Mr. Hastings struck you with so much horror, that in the spring of 1782, in the Rockingham Administration, you moved the following Resolutions, which

were voted *unanimously* by the House of Commons:

29th April. “ That any attempts to seize
 “ upon the revenues of the kingdom of Tan-
 “ jore, and to confiscate the same for the pur-
 “ pose of the Nabob, *or of the East India*
 “ *Company*, is contrary to the public faith,
 “ and tends to the *oppression* and *ruin* of the
 “ country.”

28th May. “ That if any person, in viola-
 “ tion of the public faith, given by the East
 “ India Company in 1775, and contrary to
 “ the true intent and meaning of the several
 “ Resolutions of this House, of the 29th of
 “ April last, have taken, in *sequestration* or
 “ otherwise, the revenues of Tanjore, into
 “ the management of the Nabob of Arcot,
 “ or of the East India Company, it is the duty

“ of the Court of Directors, *forthwith*, to
 “ order the said revenues to be returned to
 “ the administration of the King of Tanjore,
 “ *agreeable to the treaties of the years 1762*
 “ *and 1775.*”

In conformity to the spirit of these resolutions, after you became the Minister of India, you ordered Sir A. Campbell, to conclude one Treaty with the Nabob of Arcot, and another with the Rajah of Tanjore; the orders were obeyed, and the treaties were concluded in February 1787.

The various articles in these treaties are worded with so much clearness and perspicuity, that it is impossible for a man who can read to mistake their letter or their spirit.

The

The meaning is most evidently this, that under no possible circumstances should the Company seize upon the revenues and government of the Carnatic and Tanjore : but if by mismanagement on the part of the Nabob, or the Rajah, they should fail in their stipulated payments, then certain measures were to be taken in order to secure the Company ; the extent of these measures was most accurately defined, and beyond that extent *the Company could not go*, without a direct breach of the treaties.

The preamble to each Treaty states in substance, “ That peace being happily re-established in the Carnatic, the present hour
 “ is considered as best suited for settling
 “ and arranging, by a *just* and *equitable* treaty, a plan for the future defence and protection of the Carnatic.” After this sensible

ble exordium, it is stated, “ that the Nabob
 “ and the Rajah shall pay a specific sum an-
 “ nually, for the military peace establish-
 “ ment of the Carnatic.”

It is farther stated, “ that in war, four-
 “ fifths of their revenue shall be appropriated
 “ for the service of the war.”—It is also
 agreed, “ that in peace, whenever the pay-
 “ ments fall one month in arrear, the Com-
 “ pany shall have a claim upon the revenues
 “ of certain specified districts, and shall have
 “ power to send superintendants into those
 “ specified districts, who shall receive the
 “ rents from the *Nabob's Aumils*. That if
 “ the Aumils behave ill, the Nabob shall
 “ dismiss them, and appoint such others as
 “ the Governor and Council shall recom-
 “ mend.” It is farther specified, that when
 “ the

“ the arrears are paid up, the Company’s superintendants shall be recalled.”

In the event of war, “ the Company are
 “ to send inspectors to see that four-fifths of
 “ the revenues are honestly applied to the public
 “ service, and the Nabob has the *same*
 “ *privilege* of appointing inspectors, in order
 “ to be convinced that four-fifths of *the Company’s*
 “ *revenues* are applied with the same
 “ fidelity to the public service.” It is farther
 agreed, “ that if the Nabob diverts any part
 “ of the four-fifths of his revenues from the
 “ public service, then the Company may
 “ send *superintendants*, who are to receive
 “ the revenues *from his Aumils*.” After all
 these provisions are made with as much perspicuity
 as our language, or any language can admit of,
 it is *expressly* said, “ that the
 “ exercise of *power* over the said districts and
 “ farms,

“ farms, in case of *failure*, shall not extend,
 “ or be construed to extend, to deprive his
 “ Highness the Nabob of the Carnatic, in be-
 “ half of himself or his successors, of the Civil
 “ Government thereof, the credit of his family,
 “ or the dignity of his illustrious House, but
 “ that the same shall be preserved to him and
 “ them inviolable, saving and excepting the
 “ powers in the foregoing article expressed and
 “ mentioned.”

There is another very fair stipulation, that
 if there should be an essential failure in the
 crops from want of rain, or any unforeseen
 calamity, there shall be a deduction in the
 payment tantamount to the injury received.

Such is the treaty concluded, *under your*
own orders, with the Nabob, (and that with
 the Rajah is similar to it) in which every thing
 that

that *could happen*, either in *peace* or in *war*,
is *expressly provided for*.

To give additional *solemnity* to this treaty,
Sir John Macpherfon and Mr. Stables, who
were at Madras, on their way to England at
that time, were present when it was signed,
and witnessed its execution.

Sir A. Campbell, in a letter to the Direc-
tors, details the various steps that he took pre-
vious to the conclusion of this treaty, and he
speaks in the following warm terms of the
Nabob:

“ I have narrowly watched the Nabob’s
“ *conduct* and *sentiments* since my arrival in
“ this country, *and I am ready to declare*,
“ that I do not think it possible that any
“ *Prince* or *power on earth*, can be more

N

“ *sincerely*

“ *sincerely attached* to the prosperity of the
 “ Honourable Company than his Highness,
 “ *or that any one has a higher claim to their*
 “ *favour and liberality.*”

The conclusion of this treaty appeared to be a point of such importance, and such was your sense of Sir A. Campbell's services in effecting your object, that, after the period for the sailing of a packet was passed, you promise, in a postscript to the general letter, to reply particularly to the Fort St. George dispatches, by the next season, and then you add these words :

“ But we cannot omit embracing the ear-
 “ *liest opportunity* of expressing *our warmest*
 “ *approbation* of the manner in which OUR
 “ ORDERS, relative to the treaty with the
 “ Na-

“ Nabob of Arcot, *have been carried into execution.*”

After so marked an approbation from the Minister of India, the Nabob and the Rajah might well believe, that nothing would have induced you to violate these treaties.

They well knew that you had very severely censured Mr. Hastings, upon the Journals of Parliament, for pressing Lord Macartney to apply the resources of Tanjore to the public service during the late war, because it was contrary to “ *public faith*, and tended to the “ *oppression and ruin of the country*, to seize “ *the government.*

They *knew* that your tender regard for *British honour*, had induced *you* to impeach Mr. Hastings, for a supposed violation of faith,

although no Prince, or power in India, complained against him, on this, or on any other head. They *knew* that *your treaties* provided expressly *for every contingency* that could happen, both *in peace in war*; and they *knew* that *no possible* event could justify you in seizing their dominions; of course they could not *believe*, that under *any circumstances*, you would have *degraded, disgraced, and dishonoured*, both them and the British nation.

ASIATICUS.

18th Jan. 1792.

L E T.

LETTER VIII.

S I R,

AT the time the Nabob of Arcot signed the treaty, he informed Sir Archibald Campbell that he had taken a very heavy burthen of expence upon himself; and soon after Sir A. Campbell's departure from Madras, he represented in very strong terms to Lord Cornwallis the impoverished state of the Carnatic, and his own difficulties in paying so large a sum annually to the Company and his creditors.

These representations, if they were founded in truth, confirmed the sentiments that were delivered in Parliament some years ago by your friend Mr. Burke.

The

The Nabob paid the sums that he had stipulated to discharge for two years; but in March 1790, which was in the third year of the treaty, he fell six lacks and a half of pagodas in arrears.

By the letter of the treaty, the Madras Government might have insisted upon the Nabob's assigning to them certain districts, the revenues of which they might have received from the Nabob's Aumils, until the arrear had been paid up; but they were in the most positive terms precluded from interfering in the civil government of the country.

This step they did not take, and General Meadows, the month after his accession to the Government, wrote to the Directors in the following terms :

31st March, 1790, " We have a long ar-
 " rear both from and to us. His Highness
 " the Nabob is so backward in his payments,
 " and oppressive to his Polegars, that at
 " this time it is so necessary to have on our
 " side, that *I conceive* it will be *absolutely ne-*
 " *cessary*, upon his first material delay of pay-
 " ment, *to take the management of his country*
 " *into your own hands* ; a measure, in spite of
 " the opposition to it, so advantageous to you,
 " the country, and even to his Highness him-
 " self, when so wisely projected and ably ex-
 " ecuted by Lord Macartney."

I do not mean to question the propriety
 of such sentiments as coming from General
 Meadows, who expected, when he wrote the
 letter, that he should want two hundred and
 forty thousand pounds a month for the pay
 of his army. But I would ask you, where
 then

then is the boasted faith of Great Britain *under your administration?* What *consistency* can *you lay* claim to? At the very moment that you are prosecuting *one Governor*, because, as *you* think, he violated a treaty *when surrounded with difficulties*, you have given your *complete and entire approbation* to General Meadows, who *really and truly*, and in *substance* says, “ We have a treaty with the Nabob, “ by which certain provisions are made for “ our security, provided he fails in his pay- “ ment. The provisions are *inadequate*, and “ *therefore* it is absolutely necessary, *we should* “ *break the treaty.*”

What adds to my wonder on this occasion is, that *you* who are so jealous of the honour and good faith of Great Britain in India, that you would not allow Tippoo to attack an inconsiderable Chief beyond the extreme
point

point of the Carnatic, because he was our ally, yet approve *completely* and *entirely* of an avowed breach of faith with the oldest ally of England in India, with a Prince who has been in constant correspondence with his late, and present Majesty, and who shared with us in our earliest struggles for empire, under Lawrence, Clive, and Coote; nay, you first approved of a war originating from a *constructive breach of treaty*, and then ratified, and thereby made your own, a *direct and avowed breach of treaty* committed in the very commencement of it.

In the letter from the Madras Government to the Court of Directors, which is before the House of Commons, they detailed the various applications that they had made to the Nabob, for the balance due to them according to the stipulations in Sir A.

Campbell's treaty; and war being in fact inevitable, and their army equipping for the field, they *candidly*, and *fairly* say, (in their letter to Bengal) "We proceeded to remark *on the insufficiency* of the stipulations *in Sir Archibald Campbell's treaty*, to secure the regular receipt of 4-5ths of the Nabob's revenues, agreed to be paid to the Company's treasury, *in the event of war.*"

They say further, "With this view we pointed out to his Lordship in council, *the impolicy of depending for our principal resources*, at a time *when the greatest exertions were necessary*, and *pecuniary supplies of the utmost importance*, upon the operation and management of the Nabob's Government, of which the system was perhaps as defective and insufficient as any upon earth; and we did not hesitate to declare it, *as our*

unqua-

“ *unqualified opinion, that this Government*
 “ *ought, during the war, to take the Nabob's*
 “ *country under their own management, as af-*
 “ *fording the only means by which the re-*
 “ *sources to be derived from it could be*
 “ *realized, and the fidelity and attachment*
 “ *of the Polegars, and tributaries secured,*
 “ *which is of the utmost importance to the*
 “ *successful operations of the war.*

“ In the event of his Lordship's agreeing
 “ with us in opinion, and instructing us to
 “ act in conformity, we submitted to him
 “ the *necessity* of our adopting the measure,
 “ *in so comprehensive a manner, as to preclude*
 “ *any kind of interference on the part of the Na-*
 “ *bob, while the country was under our ma-*
 “ *nagement, and stating that if this were not*
 “ *done, the expected advantages would not be*
 “ *derived.*”

All that can be said of this reasoning is, that, according to the opinion of the Madras Government, Sir Archibald Campbell had concluded an inefficient, foolish treaty, and that there was an absolute NECESSITY *to violate it*. As to the Nabob's not ruling his country *well*, it must be allowed, at least, that he governed it upon the same principles in 1790, *when we broke the treaty*, as in 1787, *when we made the treaty*; and if we are to make *a pensioner* of every Sovereign in India, who does not govern his dominions so well as we have ruled Bengal, I will take upon me to say, that there will not be one independent Prince throughout Indostan and Deccan.

In fact, the present Government of Madras has pronounced Sir Archibald Campbell's treaty to be *radically defective*. I hope

Lord Grenville will be his defender, since his Lordship has publicly declared, “ that
 “ this country owed obligations to Sir Archibald Campbell, which she never can
 “ repay.”

I hope *you* also will justify *your own orders*, for the treaty is *your's*, and not Sir Archibald's, since the moment you heard that it was concluded, you, in the name of the Court of Directors, wrote to him, “ that
 “ you could not omit embracing the earliest
 “ opportunity of expressing your *warmest*
 “ *approbation* of the manner in which *your*
 “ *orders*, relative to the treaty with the Nabob of Arcot, had been carried into execution.”

The Government of Bengal say, in reply to the representation from Madras, “ that
 “ the

“ the resources of Bengal, exhausted as
 “ they are by drains of various kinds, du-
 “ ring a long series of successive years,
 “ could not long support such expences as
 “ those with which the present war must be
 “ attended,” even were the Nabob punctual
 in his payments ; and they add, that unless
 the whole, or great part of the heavy ar-
 rears are paid off, and the proportion of the
 Nabob and the Rajah punctually discharged
 in future, “ we not only foresee great im-
 “ mediate embarrassment to the Company’s
 “ finances, but also much ground for ap-
 “ prehension, that the ultimate success of the
 “ war may be greatly endangered.”

They proceed therefore to authorize the
 Madras Board to assume the *revenues* and *go-
 vernment*, both of the Carnatic and Tanjore.

You

You will observe, that throughout this transaction, neither the Madras, nor the Bengal Government, pretend that they are acting agreeably either to the *letter* or the *spirit* of Sir Archibald Campbell's treaties.

But to put this matter out of all doubt, I shall transcribe the following passages of a letter from General Medows and his Council to Bengal, which will shew the opinion *they* entertained of these treaties :

12th May, 1790, " It might have been *expected*, that the securities for the performance of the war stipulations, which are of such importance, would have been made *stronger* than those which are provided in the event of failures in the time of peace, but they are, in fact, *less efficient*, and the
" process

“process prescribed for failures in time of
 “war, is so tedious and complicated, *that it*
 “*can scarce be said to deserve the name of any*
 “*security or provision whatever.*”

“If the prosecution of a vigorous war,
 “and the defence of the country, *are to de-*
 “*pend upon us*, we conceive it *self-evident*,
 “that we *must have recourse to modes very dif-*
 “*ferent from those prescribed by Sir A. Camp-*
 “*bell's treaty.*”

The Madras Government first endeavoured
 to *persuade* the Nabob to resign his govern-
 ment during the war, and until the arrears
 were paid off. This, at it was very natural to
 believe, was a vain attempt. He professed
 the utmost astonishment at the attempt, but
 offered to receive inspectors, agreeably to
 the *letter* and spirit of Sir Archibald Camp-
 bell's

bell's treaty. To this the acting Governor replied, " that the powers *vested by the treaty,*
 " in the appointment of inspectors, *were not*
 " *judged adequate.*"

The Nabob again offered to receive inspectors, *agreeable to the treaty,* and added,
 " I cannot allow myself for one moment to
 " suppose, that while our whole force is
 " directed against our inveterate enemy,
 " *whose fall aggrandizes two new allies of the*
 " *Company,* the Supreme Government should
 " mean to dispossess the old and faithful ally
 " of the King of Great Britain, the English
 " nation, and the Company, *of his domi-*
 " *nions.*"

These remonstrances he repeats very often,
 and calls upon the Madras Government to

abide by the treaty. "His Highness" (they say in a letter to Bengal) "will consent to the
 "Company's Collectors being sent, *agreeably*
 "to the treaty, which, *he knows*, is confi-
 "dered by us, as *insufficient security*."

The Nabob holds out to the last, and in his closing letter he says, "In the mean
 "time, I repeat, and now probably for
 "the last time on this occasion, that I shall
 "continue to exercise the government of
 "my country, and enforce obedience to my
 "orders, as the legal, and acknowledged
 "Sovereign. I inclose you a copy of the
 "orders I have issued to my Aumildars in
 "consequence of the measures you have
 "taken."

These

These orders were a recital of the material articles of his late treaty with the English. He then says, that he has offered to fulfil the condition of the treaty, but that the Madras Government are determined to break it; and he orders his Aumlidars to obey no directions, but from himself.

Immediately after this circular letter was sent, the Nabob was deprived of his country, so was the Rajah of Tanjore, and both have *strongly*, but *ineffectually* appealed for redress to those Ministers, who are now prosecuting Mr. Hastings *for breach of faith* to an ally of Great Britain.

I will *prove*, in my next letter, that in giving entire and *complete approbation* to these

measures, you have abandoned *all your principles*, and all your *professions*, as a Minister of India.

ASIATICUS.

21 Jan. 1792.

LET-

LETTER IX.

SIR,

WERE Mr. Pitt to propose a tax bill in the House of Commons, to argue long and ably in defence of it, and then to divide with those who opposed it; with all our respect for the privilege of Parliament, we could hardly avoid taking notice of such monstrous inconsistency.

You have proposed resolutions, and Parliament has voted them; you have laid down certain principles, as the fixed and unalterable principles, by which India ought to be governed, and you have abandoned those principles completely.

Not

Not all the *public services* of Mr. Hastings could screen him from your censure in the two last Parliaments, “because he had violated the *public faith*, and seemed more ambitious of the character of an *Alexander* or an *Aurungzebe*, than of the peaceable representative of a company of merchants.”

I admit most fully, that thinking as you professed to do of Mr. Hastings, your assent to his impeachment was strictly conformable to the *principles*, which are contained in your resolutions, but recent events have convinced the world, that the *code of laws* which you framed for the guidance of *others*, have been utterly *disregarded* by yourself.

I have proved, beyond the possibility of a cavil or dispute, that the only two treaties, concluded by *your own orders*, and stamped

by your *warmest approbation*, have been avowedly violated, and that you have *completely* and *entirely approved* of the violation of both.

When the subject was mentioned in the last Session, and when a Member pledged himself to prove the facts, you boldly declared, that every step taken by Lord Cornwallis and General Medows was *warranted by treaties*, and that the Member who had pledged himself to prove the reverse, had offered a pledge, *which he never could redeem*. In that manly, decisive style, which distinguishes your speeches, you declared that you should be totally barred *from every plea of defence*, if it should be proved to the public, that you had *any share* in approving a breach of treaty *by others*, while you voted for the *continuance* of the Impeachment of Mr. Hastings, *on that particular point*.

What

What *man* could say more? such sentiments would do credit to a man of honour. But what a *miserable close* has followed *so spirited an opening!!*

The papers which prove the violation of treaties, by the candid *acknowledgement* of those who *did violate them*, are before the public, and both Houses of Parliament; the facts were fully and ably stated, both by Lord Portchester, the Marquis of Lansdown, and Lord Stormont, and the truth of the facts was fully admitted by the Lord Chancellor, as indeed they must be by every man, who will not prefer the *assertion* of the Minister of India to the evidence of his own senses.

Lord Grenville, who defended the justice of the war in India, with great ability and with powerful eloquence, wisely chose

cast

cast a veil over the breach of the two treaties, though “ he lamented the death of Sir Archibald Campbell, one of the *ablest, honestest, and most upright servants of the Company*, who had ended a most honourable life, and was no longer in a situation of enjoying what would have been to him, above all things, gratifying, viz. *the approbation of both Houses of Parliament.*”

Ministers are certainly framed of very different materials from *common mortals*; were I to adopt as my own opinion of the Nabob of Arcot, that professed by Sir A. Campbell, and were I next to take *General Medows's* character of *the same Prince*; were I to say that *one Governor* deserved my warmest approbation for concluding a treaty with him, on a solid and lasting foundation, and that *another Governor* deserved my approbation also for

Q breaking

breaking it, because it was so loose, and inefficient as to be useless, I should either be laughed at as an idiot, or despised as a knave.

To complete this subject, I must state *the circumstances of the times*, when Mr. Hastings, according to *your ideas*, violated certain treaties, for which he is *now under prosecution*, with your concurrence, and when the present Governments in India violated treaties, for which you have transmitted to them, in conjunction with Mr. Pitt, *your complete and entire approbation.*

In the year 1781, we were, as you well know, at war with all the great powers of India and Europe; Mr. Hastings's *motive* for concluding the treaty of Chunar has not even been doubted. It was to obtain the *earliest possible payment* of a very large sum of
 2 money,

money, and he succeeded; but to urge the Nabob of Oude to resume the treasures in his mother's possessions, and to seize her Jaghires, was to forfeit the guarantee of the Company, consequently *to violate a solemn Treaty*, and of course to *disgrace* and to *degrade* the honour of Great Britain.

The only *possible motive* that could have induced Mr. Hastings to advise Lord Macartney, in the same year, 1781, to apply the revenues of Tanjore to the public service, was to procure every rupee that could be scraped together, in that most trying hour of difficulty and danger.

For the advice, *you* censured him by a Parliamentary resolution; for procuring a large sum of money from Oude, *you impeached him*, because he *violated a solemn treaty*.

Will you venture, Sir, to tell the public, that India was in the same critical state in 1790, *when your treaties were violated*, as it was in 1781, when the treaty of Chunar was signed? I will take upon me to affirm, that you will not.

In 1781, with exhausted resources, we had a war to maintain in every quarter of India; and peace was only to be procured by the most vigorous and spirited exertions; for, without wasting your time or mine, by a discussion of the wisdom *of your resolutions*, I can assure you that *in India*, it is not the mode of getting a peace, to tell the whole world, as you did, *that we were unable to carry on the war, and that we were the aggressors originally*.

The

The distress *at home* in 1781 was very serious also; the nation, or rather the Ministers and Parliament, still persisted in the fatal American contest, and all Europe rejoiced at our folly. Mr. Hastings could not venture to draw bills upon England, and if he had, there were, as he well knew, no assets in Leadenhall Street to discharge them. Reduced at last to the necessity either of putting a total stop to the investment, or drawing bills to the amount of it, he adopted the latter expedient, and though the goods he sent to England *sold for a considerable profit*, yet in the *Portland administration*, when the conscientious Sir Henry Fletcher was the chairman, and when his Grace, and Lord John Cavendish had, *by law*, the *inspection* and *approval* of all letters, the Directors wrote a very severe censure to Mr. Hastings for drawing those bills, and told him, that “ he

“ *must*

*“ must fall upon some other mode of supplying
 “ the public exigencies.”*

In 1790 the case was totally changed. We had had a fix years peace. The resources of Bengal, Benares, and Oude, had improved far beyond *your* most sanguine expectation, and even the predictions that *I* had ventured to make, *were more than fulfilled*. The successful struggle that we had made in the late war against a host of foes, had very considerably added to the reputation of Great Britain in India. In Bengal and in Oude she was unaffailable, and her receipts exceeded her expences above two millions sterling a year.

At Madras and Bombay, by a policy which I have ever ventured to doubt the wisdom of, we had very considerable armies, beyond the
 ability

ability of either Government to support. But still the military force was most respectable; if sufficient pains had not been taken to secure the due payment of the sums which the Carnatic and Tanjore were to advance each year, the error is *yours*.

England had fully recovered its consequence amongst the nations of Europe, and the King's India Ministers and Parliament, wisely gave that full *support* and *confidence* to Lord Cornwallis, which they *denied* to Mr. Hastings.

Under all these favourable circumstances a war was determined upon. The Marattas and the Nizam, who were *friends* to Hyder Ally Cawn in the last war, were enemies to Tippoo Sultaun in this.

The

The French who sent, in the course of the last war, seventeen sail of the line with frigates, five thousand land forces, and seven millions sterling to India, (though part of the force and money was interrupted in its way out) had not a man upon the continent in this war, who had even a wish to venture beyond the walls of Pondicherry ; so torn and divided were they by intestine commotions.

With all these favourable circumstances, General Medows, soon after he came to Madras, and before an army was assembled, foretold the *absolute necessity* of seizing the Government of the Carnatic.

Suppose *Mr. Hastings* had expressed such sentiments, what would you, and Mr. Pitt, and the Managers, have said *to him* ? Again, let me guard myself from the suspicion of intending

tending a reflection upon General Medows ; it is your approval of *those sentiments*, in opposition to *your recorded principles*, that strikes me with astonishment.

I understand from Captain Broome, in his excellent Elucidation, that had Mr. Hastings justified his acts on the plea of *necessity*, not a word would have been said against him by you ; but that he had urged *false motives* for violent measures.

Take it upon this ground, though I believe the reverse is clear to the whole world, and then *I will say*, that provided you have written to Madras in the *following terms*, you are in this instance perfectly consistent :

“ We have received, and read with the
“ utmost attention, all your late proceedings

R

“ rela-

“ relative to the Nabob of Arcot and the Ra-
 “ jah of Tanjore; we have also examined,
 “ with the strictest accuracy, every clause
 “ in the treaties concluded with those
 “ Princes, *by our orders*, and to which we
 “ have given our *warmest approbation*. We
 “ shall now proceed to give you our senti-
 “ ments and our directions for your future
 “ guidance.”

“ Knowing, as you well did, the very se-
 “ vere distresses which our several Govern-
 “ ments laboured under in the late war,
 “ from a want of pecuniary supplies, we are
 “ not surprized that the amount of the ar-
 “ rears, which were due to you from the
 “ Carnatic and Tanjore, when war was in-
 “ evitable, became a subject of your most
 “ serious consideration. We do not at all
 “ differ with you in opinion, upon the con-
 “ sequence

“ fequence it was to our interefts, to conciliate the polygars and tributaries of the Carnatic before the war commenced, and during its continuance ; for if it was prolonged beyond one campaign, there was every reason to believe that Tippoo would make an incurfion into the Carnatic, as he actually did in December 1790.”

“ It is impoffible, therefore, for us to withhold our approbation from you, becaufe every thing that you have done, appears to proceed from a regard to our interefts.”

“ But *we* are placed in fo very different a fituation, that there are fome cafes in which *we* are not at liberty to exercife our own difcretion. The *legiflature* has ftrictly enjoined a facred obfervance of treaties, and we have, on a former occafion, transf-

“ mitted certain *resolutions* moved in Parlia-
 “ ment, in which an *inviolable regard to the*
 “ *faith of treaties* is most particularly recom-
 “ mended.”

“ The only point left, therefore, for our
 “ consideration is, whether by the *letter*
 “ or *the spirit* of the treaties concluded by
 “ Sir Archibald Campbell, you could, under
 “ any circumstances short of a voluntary
 “ surrender of their dominions, by the Na-
 “ bob and the Rajah, have assumed the Go-
 “ vernment of the Carnatic and Tanjore ?”

“ We are compelled to declare, that the
 “ very case which gave rise to your seizure
 “ of the countries, is most expressly provi-
 “ ded for, and you are *precluded*, in positive
 “ terms, by the treaties, from taking the
 “ countries.”

“ If

“ If by any neglect of the late administration,
 “ tion, measures were not adopted for recovering the balance that was due when our
 “ present Governor arrived, we do not see
 “ how the Nabob and the Rajah are to be
 “ made responsible *in the manner that you*
 “ *have made them responsible.*”

“ In the even of failure on peace you had
 “ *a right* to collect the rents from the Nabob Aumils; in war you had a right to
 “ send inspectors; and Sir Archibald Campbell actually bound the British nation to
 “ proceed *no farther* on any contingency
 “ *whatever.*”

“ Indeed your own statement of the
 “ case renders argument unnecessary. You
 “ thought the treaties inefficient, and fairly
 “ con-

“ conceived that you had, therefore, a right
“ to violate them.”

“ We are exceedingly sorry to find, that
“ such are *your sentiments* of treaties which
“ were *originally* planned by us, and which
“ Sir Archibald Campbell concluded *entirely*
“ to our *satisfaction*. But the question for
“ us to consider is, not whether the treaties
“ are or are not inefficient, but whether
“ the *British faith* was pledged for the obser-
“ vance of them ? there must be an end of
“ all confidence in treaties in India, if a par-
“ ty conceiving it has made an inefficient
“ engagement shall be at liberty to break it,
“ whenever it suits his conveniency.”

“ It is incumbent *upon us* to recollect that
“ Mr. Hastings has been under a prosecution
“ for five years in the name of all the peo-
“ ple

“ ple of Great Britain, and the leading fea-
 “ ture of his Impeachment was, a breach of
 “ faith, not to an ally of the Company, but
 “ to the *mother* and *subject* of an ally. No
 “ doubt can be entertained but that the *origi-*
 “ *nal engagement* formed with her, to which
 “ the Company was *the guarantee*, was in
 “ the highest degree *impolitic*. To allow the
 “ mother of the Nabob of Oude to retain
 “ in her possession for six years, at least one,
 “ and probably more than two millions ster-
 “ ling, to command a military force and to
 “ exercise an *independent authority* in her
 “ son's dominions, was dangerous and im-
 “ proper, but the *national faith* was pledged
 “ for her *security*, and Mr. Hastings was
 “ impeached on a charge of having violated
 “ it.”

“ We

“ We voted for that Impeachment *in ano-*
 “ *ther character*, but as Ministers, we ought
 “ not to *abandon* all the *principles* that we
 “ have professed, as Members of a British
 “ senate,”

“ At the same time that we exculpate *you*
 “ from all blame, in having seized the go-
 “ vernment of the Carnatic and Tanjore,
 “ contrary to a solemn treaty, we should
 “ deem ourselves deeply criminal indeed,
 “ if we did not order you, as we now most
 “ peremptorily do, *instantly* to restore the
 “ Carnatic to the Nabob, and Tanjore to
 “ the Rajah.”

“ We farther direct that you enforce the
 “ stipulated payments from each, by every
 “ mode that you can, *consistently* with the

“ *letter and spirit* of Sir A. Campbell’s *trea-*
 “ *ties*, but that you go *nó farther.*”

Orders of this nature would be perfectly
 consonant to your *professions.*

ASIATICUS.

Jan. 25, 1792.

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LETTER X.

S I R,

THAT the inconsistencies which I have laid to your charge, may not be lost in the length and multiplicity of the arguments through which they are diffused, I will briefly sum up the substance of them, in distinct articles.

1st. That you moved and carried a Resolution in Parliament, that the stoppage of the tribute of the Emperor Shaw Allum was contrary to *policy* and *good faith*; and that such wise and practicable measures should be adopted *in future*, as might redeem *the national honour*. Yet though this resolution passed in

1782,

1782, and you have yourself been intrusted with the means of carrying it into execution, and have been in effect the acting Minister for the affairs in India, from 1784, you have neither caused the tribute to be *restored*, nor taken *any one measure*, either to *redeem*, or *palliate* the loss of the *national* honour.

2d. You have voted *as a Member of Parliament*, that Mr. Hastings made demands of money upon Cheyt Sing, for three successive years, *contrary to treaty*, and that he *unjustly* and *tyrannically* expelled him from *his dominions*; yet though positively enjoined by law, to *restore* every Rajah and Zemindar who had been *unjustly* dispossessed, you have not restored Cheyt Sing; on the contrary, you have taken credit *annually* for an additional revenue of two hundred thousand pounds a year, *obtained by his expulsion*. You cannot

say that you wait the result of Mr. Hastings's impeachment, because you became the India Minister in *August* 1784, and *ought* to have sent orders *forthwith*, that is, in the *first year* of your ministerial duty, for his restoration. His expulsion was not stated to be *criminal* by the Commons, until June 1786, nearly *two years* after you had been the Minister of India.

3d. You voted on the 9th of May 1787, that Bengal was ruined and depopulated, her Revenues *diminished*, and her inhabitants *destroyed*, with an infinite variety of circumstances expressive of misery, wretchedness, and oppression. But on the 7th, two days only *preceding*, you had proved the *increase* of the revenues, by the *evidence of figures*. You unequivocally declared that Bengal was the best governed country in India, and that
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the state of our empire in India, as compared to *this country*, was as *light*, opposed to *darkness*. Such a remark could only apply to Bengal, in other words to *Mr. Hastings*, for Madras and Bombay did not pay *their own charges*, by *half a million a year at the least*.

4th. You repeated the same sentiments each year, from 1787 to this day, and you *patiently* heard the Managers in Westminster-hall, who unequivocally in each year proclaimed *the ruin of Bengal*, through the mal-administration of Mr. Hastings.

5th. You *approved*, in four several letters to Bengal, of certain arrangements formed by Mr. Hastings in Oude, and you ordered that they should be *invariably adhered to*. As a Member of Parliament, you voted that the
delega-

delegation, under which he formed those arrangements was *illegal*; you *condemned* the *arrangements*, and voted that Mr. Hastings was guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors for having formed them.

6th. In 1782, you moved a resolution in Parliament, that to seize the government and revenues of Tanjore, would be a breach of *faith*, and *oppressive* and *ruinous* to the *country*; and if so seized, it was the duty of the Directors to order them *to be forthwith restored* to the Rajah. In 1790, the revenues and government were seized, *in avowed breach of treaty*. In 1791, you *completely* and *entirely approve* this transaction, and do *not* order them to be forthwith *restored*, or to be restored at all, though the Rajah is even *intemperate* in his complaints of the injustice of the British Government,

7th.

7th. In 1782, you recorded it as a *fixed, unalterable principle*, that treaties should be *inviolably preserved*. The law states the same principles. In 1786, you sent *orders* to Sir Archibald Campbell to conclude two treaties, one with the Nabob, and the other with the Rajah of Tanjore. Sir Archibald obeys your orders; you transmit to him *your warmest approbation*, for the *manner* in which he carried *your orders* into execution. In 1790, the Government of Madras break these treaties, and in 1791, you *approve* of their conduct.

8th. You have prohibited and condemned all wars for conquest and extent of dominion, in India; yet you approve of the present war, which has for its object *conquest*, and extent of dominion.

9th.

9th. In the year 1784, you transmit your thanks to Mr. Hastings. (For the *law* makes every act of the Directors *yours*, since it is nugatory until it has received your approbation.) In the year 1785, you transmit an acknowledgement of his *long, faithful, and able services*. In the year 1787, you *condemn* as *criminal*, all the acts of his administration, *civil, military, political, and financial*.

I have now but a few observations to add, and shall then take my leave.

In the course of these Letters I have been very careful to apply the construction, which I have put upon your measures, to yourself alone, or to Mr. Pitt, acting in concert with you. I include ~~One~~ else in the charge, whether of inconsistency, injustice, or impolicy.

The quality of human actions is seldom intrinsically, but always relatively, good or evil. Of the guilt which I have imputed to you, some may be culpable in a venial degree ; others wholly innocent, although both may have been participators, or even perpetrators of the acts from which it is inferred. Nay, I will go yet farther, and say, that it may so happen from a different relation of the same act and of its agents, that it shall be criminal in one, and yet meritorious in another.

For instance : all the acts which are mentioned in the preceding articles and which concern Mr. Hastings, are meritorious, as they respect him, because he thought them so : but they are highly criminal in Mr. Dundas, because he has joined in a *solemn condemnation of them* ; and yet has suffered the continuance of some, *having the power to*

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revoke

revoke them ; and has himself issued orders for the confirmation of the rest.

The present war in India may be, as I think I have proved, warranted by strict justice, and reconcileable to sound policy ; and so far it reflects credit on Lord Cornwallis who engaged in it. But the ground on which it is justifiable *abroad*, will not avail Mr. Dundas at home, who has adopted the responsibility of it, in direct contradiction to a law of his own formation, which expressly condemns all schemes of conquest and extent of dominion ; and yet these are the declared objects of the war.

But for the first preparatory operation of the war, namely, the seizure of the Carnatic, I do not find myself so well qualified to decide on the relative quality of this transaction,

tion, as of the others in which you bear, as in this, a principal share. On your part of it I have no doubt what judgement to pass. The treaty with the Nabob was formed under your order requiring it. You approved it and ratified it: yet in three years afterwards you approved and ratified the violation of it, on precisely the same ground for which the treaty itself had expressly provided a remedy in the very article of it which was violated. No plea can excuse, no sophistry can cover the enormity of such a transaction. Far different is the case of the gentlemen of Madras in relation to it. They had no share in the formation of the treaty, nor does it appear that they had any in the ratification of it: on the contrary, the first notice that we find them take of it, is a declaration of its utter *inefficiency*, *inutility*, and a protest against the observance it, on the plea that the war

could not be maintained, nor the Carnatic defended, *without an absolute departure from it*. I do not justify the plea: but certainly there is a wide difference between their breach of a treaty, in which they had no other concern, and which they thought of dangerous tendency to their interests, of which they had charge, and your breach of a treaty made under your own express authority, and ratified by your own sanction.

What defence Lord Cornwallis may set up for the authority which he gave upon this occasion, I will not take upon me to suggest. I am not his advocate, nor would it become me to offer in his justification reasons which he may disclaim, or to ascribe to him motives which he alone can know. But as I think it incumbent upon me to declare, that I mean not by any thing that I have written
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to cast the least reproach or insinuation upon his Lordship ; so I may with propriety assign my own reasons for making this distinction.

From the records of this affair, which have been published, it appears that Lord Cornwallis has adopted the plea of the Governor and Council of Fort St. George, but so feebly as to indicate a strong reluctance to yield to it, and rather the appearance of a desire to be convinced, than an actual conviction of its validity. Possibly, taking his judgement of the necessity from those who had the best means of forming it, he did believe the circumstances to be as they were stated to him ; although the contrary may be inferred from his elusive reply to their first requisition of his authority, to take by force the management of the Government of the Carnatic ; and when pressed to it in terms which left
him

him no other alternative, but to relinquish the war already declared, or to prosecute it without any hope of assistance from the resources of the Carnatic, he then, it is true, did yield his assent, but repeated, in a very earnest manner, the recommendation of his former letter, that they would still endeavour to obtain their claim by solicitation, rather than possess themselves of it by force. If in this case he gave way to a strong political necessity, let it be remembered that the war was wholly of his direction. The Members who were then of the Council at Madras, had no concern whatever in the formation of it, nor in the first steps which led to it; and General Medows, the Governor of Madras, on whom the conduct of the war depended, was but newly arrived there. The whole responsibility of the war, therefore, to this time, rested on Lord Cornwallis; and if it

failed of success, from the want of those means which they had stated to him to be indispensably necessary, the whole blame of it would, by his refusal to avail himself of them, fall on him alone, besides the chance of other consequences infinitely worse than any that could affect him as an individual. Had he been himself upon the spot, he might have tried the effect of that conciliation which he recommended. No occasion existed at that time which could have justified him in quitting the seat and scene of his own Government, to go to Madras. He embarked by himself in a hazardous plan, for the execution of which, he depended absolutely on the agency of others; and they had in a manner prescribed to him the terms on which they could or would undertake it. In a word, whoever will give himself the trouble to review the situation of

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Lord Cornwallis in this conjuncture, and candidly weigh all the consequences of it in any decision which he could have formed upon it, will be convinced that cases may occur in the conduct of great affairs, (and that this was one of them) in which an option may be presented, not only of political difficulties to be surmounted, but of moral evils to be reconciled to the principle of political duty.

ASIATICUS.

26th Jan. 1792.

THE END.

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